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Letter dated 15 August 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 15 August 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 15 August 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 7 August 1997, addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations in connection with the agreement signed between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on the establishment of an Association Council (A/51/961-S/1997/624).

In the first instance, I wish to underline that Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are two sovereign States which formally recognize each other and, as such, any attempted interference by the Greek Cypriot administration with this reciprocal relationship is unwarranted and beyond its legal or moral authority.

The Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, in an obvious attempt to cover up the Greek Cypriot side's exclusive responsibility for the continuing conflict on the island since 1963, has once again described Northern Cyprus as "Turkish-occupied areas". In fact, the only occupation in Cyprus is the 34-year-old usurpation and continued occupation of the seat of Government of the 1960 partnership Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriot side. By using its illegal status as the so-called "Government of the Republic of Cyprus", the Greek Cypriot side is engaged in a wide range of activities which are harmful to the basic rights and interests of the Turkish Cypriot side, including the perpetuation of the inhuman embargoes and restrictions which seek to isolate the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus from the international community.

Moreover, with its illegal and unilateral bid for European Union membership in the name of "Cyprus", the Greek Cypriot side, which complains about the present division of the island, is actually acting to consolidate it. The Greek Cypriot side obviously lacks the political will for a bi-zonal settlement in Cyprus, based on the sovereign equality of the two sides, and has concentrated all its efforts towards achieving integration with Greece through European Union membership as a second Greek State in contravention of the 1960 Treaties on Cyprus, which preclude the membership of Cyprus in any international organization and pacts of alliance in which Greece and Turkey are not both members.

It will be recalled that the Presidents of Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in a joint declaration dated 20 January 1997, announced that each and every unilateral step by the Greek Cypriots towards European Union membership, prior to a settlement and in the absence of Turkey's own membership in the Union, would inevitably accelerate the integration process through closer ties between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and that every measure would be taken to reverse the continued isolation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus from the international community.

In spite of the above, and contrary to the rule of law and to the guiding principles set out by the United Nations in the search for a negotiated

settlement in Cyprus, the Greek Cypriot side is unjustly treated as the sole interlocutor for "Cyprus". This one-sided approach has been repeated in the recent "Agenda 2000" report of the European Commission, which envisages the opening of accession negotiations between the European Union and South Cyprus in the absence of a political solution and in total disregard of the current realities and the 1960 Treaties on Cyprus. This would certainly deal a fatal blow to the process of negotiations between the two sides, already seriously marred by an increasingly intransigent attitude displayed by the Greek Cypriot side at the talks. The decision of the European Union to open membership talks with the Greek Cypriot side, under the circumstances, can only heighten Greek Cypriot aspirations to derogate the Turkish Cypriot people from its status as co-founder to that of a "minority" within a Greek Cypriot State, to water down the 1960 guarantee system and bi-zonality and no doubt eventually to destroy the essential parameters of a settlement in Cyprus.

In the face of those developments, on 20 July 1997, Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus announced a number of measures which would be implemented towards economic and financial integration to alleviate the effects of the illegal embargoes on the Turkish Cypriots and to forge closer ties in defence and foreign policy with a view to protecting the legitimate interests of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

The two countries singed an agreement on 6 August, upon the working visit to the island by the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mr. Ismail Cem, to establish an Association Council, as foreseen in the joint statement of 20 July, which would be entrusted with the task of determining measures for partial economic and financial integration and closer association in security and foreign affairs.

Clearly, no one should expect the Turkish Cypriot side to sit idly by, without taking any action, as the unjust, irresponsible and dangerous consequences of the illegal and coercive "process" initiated by the Greek Cypriot side unfold. The agreement signed on 6 August is nothing beyond a legitimate self-defence mechanism established in the face of incessant Greek Cypriot attempts to impose its will on the Turkish Cypriot side.

It is ironic that the Greek Cypriot administration, which criticizes the Turkish Cypriot side for taking measures to defend its rights and interests through establishing closer ties with Turkey, is on the one hand leaving the Turkish Cypriot side with no alternative in the face of the policies it is pursuing and, on the other, is itself actively working towards full integration with Greece. It is noteworthy in this context that military integration between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece, which has been speedily implemented since the inception of the so-called "joint defence doctrine" in 1993, is virtually complete. After an unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces over the last decade, including the hiring of professional soldiers from Greece and the acquisition of tanks and missiles from various sources, the Greek Cypriot adminstration is preparing to inaugurate the newly constructed Paphos military airbase, which is to be put to the service of the Greek air force. The Greek Defence Minister, Mr. Akis Cohachopoulos, is expected to be present at the inauguration ceremony to be held in October, and a number of Greek F-16 fighters are scheduled to arrive and land at the Paphos airbase at that time (Greek Cypriot press of 11 August 1997). In addition, the construction of a naval base

in Zyghi, South Cyprus, for use by the Greek navy is also proceeding. Furthermore, it is reported that the sophisticated S-300 missile system purchased by the Greek Cypriot administration will become operational in the spring of 1998, and that the Greek Cypriot military personnel to operate the system will be trained by the supplier country before its deployment in South Cyprus (Greek Cypriot daily To Vima dated 10 August 1997).

The Greek Cypriot side should refrain from pursuing policies which further complicate the search for a solution and engage in a meaningful dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot side rather than merely attending the talks for tactical reasons, namely, to buy time until European Union accession talks are scheduled to begin and to provide a smokescreen for its reckless policy of military escalation. If the Greek Cypriot side is for a negotiated settlement in Cyprus, it must come to terms with the existing realities and adhere to the basic parameters of a settlement that takes into account the political and sovereign equality of the two sides and also safeguards the balance between Turkey and Greece emanating from the 1960 Treaties.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus